



THE ADVISOR

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Iraqi Soldiers Perform Goodwill Mission



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MNSTC-I

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Cover: At a landfill village near Taji, the Iraqi Army 1st Mechanized Brigade performs a goodwill mission and establishes a community presence. Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

Commentary—A New Sense of Self

By U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jim Bullion — MNSTC-I Operations (J-3)



More importantly, I began thinking about the impact of new-found freedom on a nation's sense of self. Romania is by no means a wealthy country – far from it. The physical signs of a struggling economy are plain to see – empty storefronts, ancient wheezing cars, shuttered factories, and block after block of bleak Soviet-era tenements. And yet, 16 years after having eliminated the Ceausescu regime, the Romanian people carry themselves with pride and confidence, knowing that they have thrown off the shame and humiliation of years of repression. They have replaced the lies of communism and dictatorship with the dignity of democracy and the hope of the free market system.

Their faith, which was never extinguished in 50 years of atheistic rule, has flared anew and churches have regained their positions of reverence. The Romanian people now control their destiny, and it shows in their faces and in their energetic efforts to rebuild their nation.

Less than one month after Iraq's first election, I see the same confidence and hope returning to the Iraqi people. Planning and holding their own successful election, with security pro-

I am writing this as I return to Baghdad after having participated in a conference of Iraqi Freedom coalition partners in Bucharest, Romania. The brief trip between two countries so recently liberated from the grip of totalitarian repression evoked many emotions in me – not the least of which being a renewed appreciation for the comfort of a good hotel, and the ability to walk the streets without worrying about snipers, mortars, or car bombs.

vided by their own police and soldiers standing watch over their brothers and sisters as they voted, has created a groundswell of confidence and hope throughout the country. Suddenly, the hissing and spitting of the insurgents and the terrorists seem impotent and almost pitiful.

The act of voting was a victory for the Iraqi people far outshining any military feats of arms and marks the beginning of the end for the insurgency. Historians will look back and conclude that, while the Coalition defeated Saddam and his army, it was women in black abayahs standing in line to vote who cracked the insurgency.

As in Romania, the new sense of self is very clear: In the ministries where I work, Iraqis are making plans, building organizations and creating budgets, as the Coalition increasingly watches from the sidelines. On the streets, people smile more and hold their heads a little higher. The Iraqi people are taking ownership of their nation, and it shows.

Many of the 35 nations represented at the Bucharest conference have also only recently emerged from years of oppression, and the painful memories of those dark days are still sharp. Their economies are struggling, yet what they have they are willing to share. They know the pain and dehumanization of autocracy, and, in their new-found confidence, have reached out their hands to the Iraqi people to help them down the path of hope and peace.

I was proud to be sitting with this brotherhood of nations as they discussed how they can continue to help Iraq recover and prosper. I was also proud to know the Iraqi representatives as they humbly expressed their heartfelt gratitude and confidently described their plans for the future a country that now truly belongs to the people of Iraq.

Joint Program Trains Iraqi Security Forces

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – More than 45 Iraqi officers, non-commissioned officers, and Ministry of Defense civilians received hands-on training in operating and installing high frequency radio communications equipment that will be used by the Iraqi Security Forces.

In a joint program with the NATO Training Mission-Iraq and the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, these Iraqi officers, NCOs, and civilians – who came from all over Iraq for the training – will now go back to their respective units, offices, or brigades and teach the basics of using and installing high frequency Barrett radios to their peers.

“This is a train-the-trainer course,” said U.S. Air Force Maj. Val Baker, computer information systems trainer for the Ministry of Defense joint headquarters.

The course was well received by participants.

**“This is a great course for communications,”
—Capt. Amer Saad, commander of G-6
(communications), 1st Brigade of the Iraqi
Intervention Forces**



Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces officers, NCOs, and Ministry of Defense civilians prepare for the communications course outside NATO headquarters.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

added: “The instruction and courses were very good. I will train my men and we will be able to be more effective because of the new communications.”

U.S. Army Sgt. Sean Knox, an instructor, said the training and radio installation is for high frequency, long range communications. He was impressed with how eager the group was to learn and participate in the course.

Trucks belonging to the Iraqi Police Commandos Quick Response Force were used for the new radios and installation training.

Baker said this course, along with other technical and tactical training courses, will eventually be incorporated into the Iraqi Army Signal School.



U.S. Army Sgt. Sean Knox works with a student from the radio communications course to install one of the radio antennas.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

“This is a great course for communications,” said Capt. Amer Saad, commander of G-6 (communications), 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Forces. “Learning is very important and the communications is a great start for the Iraqi forces.”

Iraqi Special Forces Signal Officer Maj. Masood Salih, who traveled from northern Iraq to attend the course,



Maj. Masood Salih of the Iraqi Special Forces works with U.S. Navy instructor CW2 Tomas Ovalle.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

Iraqi Soldiers Perform Goodwill Mission

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

TAJI, Iraq – Under the leadership of Gen. Kassim Jassin Nazal of the Iraqi Army's 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraqi soldiers performed a goodwill mission Feb. 23 distributing blankets, toys, and hygiene supplies to residents of a landfill village near Taji.

The mission's purpose was two-fold. First, the villagers who live in homes made of cooking oil tins and homemade mortar needed the supplies the Iraqi soldiers brought them. Second, it gave the Iraqi soldiers an opportunity to hone their skills in carrying out a convoy mission, providing perimeter security, and showing a presence of force protection in their community.

A U.S. military advisor support team traveled with the Iraqi soldiers to witness the fruits of their labors. "This is General Kassim's mission," U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn said. "We have advised this brigade for a little more than a year. It's fantastic to see the Iraqi leadership and the Iraqi soldiers do their thing. It's their army," he added.

Smiles were found on the faces of the villagers receiving the supplies, the Iraqi soldiers handing them out, and the team of U.S. Army Soldiers and Marines who lived and trained with the Iraqi soldiers.

Kassim said he is proud of his men and grateful to the U.S. military for the help and support they provide him.

The toys were donated by civic groups in the United States.



Iraqi villagers who live in a landfill near Taji receive blankets, hygiene supplies, candy, and toys from members of the 1st Mechanized Brigade of the Iraqi Army. The soldiers executed a successful show of presence and goodwill mission as part of their training.

-Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy



3rd ID Soldiers Help Ready Iraqi Forces

By U.S. Army Spc. Ben Brody, 2nd Brigade Combat Team

CAMP VOLUNTEER, Iraq – As the new Iraqi government continues to develop, the fledgling Iraqi Army is beginning

to hold its own and take increasing responsibility for securing the country, with the support of U.S. troops.



Staff Sgt. Mark Scott, 3/7 Cav., inspects an Iraqi Army soldier's rifle with the soldier's platoon sergeant. The Iraqi soldiers lined up for pre-combat checks before heading out on a security patrol from Camp Volunteer, Iraq

-Photo By U.S. Army Spc. Ben Brody

The 305th Soldiers, stationed at Camp Volunteer in Baghdad, are also responsible for securing the peace in two mid-sized sectors of the city.

"We're focusing on basic combat and patrolling skills for junior Iraqi soldiers, and helping develop noncommissioned officers and junior officers into good leaders," said Capt. James Turner, A Troop, 3/7 Cav., commander. "Iraqi soldiers are like any other soldiers – they do very well under good leadership."

Previous coalition units taught these Iraqi troops how to first function as a platoon, then as a company. Now, the 3/7 will oversee the 305th learning how to react as a battalion.

"I don't foresee any major obstacles, beyond the normal hiccups when you integrate two different units," said Turner, a North Branch, Mich., native. "The best thing at this stage is watching the Iraqi soldiers really internalize the training and the mindset that they are fighting for the good of their country."

Language barriers slow the training down, but 3/7 has interpreters and some Iraqi soldiers – such as 305th security platoon leader 1st Lt. Yarub al-Taweed -- who speak very good English.

"Our unit has come a long way over the past year – and our responsibilities have increased accordingly," al-Taweed said. "When we formed the unit, we didn't have vehicles or armor, and now we've got (body) armor with plates, trucks and heavy weapons. We've had a lot of success on patrols because of our training, but mostly because we know the areas, we know the people and speak the language." He

said the success of the recent elections has raised public opinion of the Iraqi Army considerably.

"Different people have different views of us, but before the elections, we were not very popular with Iraqis," al-Taweed said. "The elections gave us a chance to prove that we can protect people and want a secure Iraq. Now we are enjoying some more support. What they will think tomorrow, I don't know."

The young officer said he hopes to eventually see the cities secured by police, and the Iraqi Army defending the country's long, porous border.

"People can see we are working hard," he said. "If you are good and fair to the people, they will be good and fair to you."

As a small assembly of Iraqi troops prepared to leave Camp Volunteer for a security patrol, A Troop's Staff Sgt. Mark Scott helped them check their weapons and vehicles. Scott, along with their platoon sergeant, inspected the condition and fluid levels of the pickup trucks. The two made sure the drivers knew how to perform preventive maintenance checks and services to U.S. Army standard.

"Your mission is a patrol, but before you can accomplish that, your mission is to make sure everyone is ready," Smith told the NCO through an interpreter. "Make your soldiers do the right thing and eventually they'll do it on their own."

Scott, a sniper section NCO from Syracuse, N.Y., has spent time teaching Iraqi Army leaders to utilize rank structure to their advantage.

"What we saw was the officers trying to micromanage everything down to the individual soldiers," Scott said. "I told them, 'let your first sergeant manage the company's soldiers, let a platoon sergeant handle his platoon, let the squad leaders take care of their squads.' Now the commander sets company policy, and the first sergeant enforces it, which works much better."

"There are some promising leaders in the 305th that really believe in what they're doing," he added. "I've got a first sergeant, who goes by the nickname 'Wolf,' who keeps his troops in line like no other. You can just tell by looking at him – he's the man."

Scott and others from 3/7 will continue to work with the 305th throughout the year, and further refine the battalion's capabilities.

Hopeful for the future of Iraq, al-Taweed said he thinks the terrorists he fights will gradually disappear as people find jobs and can enjoy their freedoms.

First Iraqi Military Law Conference Convenes

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – As the country's new Army continues to form and grow, the effort to build an accompanying justice system took a historic step forward Feb. 23 with the first-ever Military Law Conference.

Held at the Baghdad Convention Center, the conference brought together Iraqi civilian judges who have been appointed to serve as military judges for cases involving criminal charges against members of the Iraqi Armed Forces, members of the Iraqi Judge Advocate Corps and the local Baghdad Bar Association, as well as retired judges and other dignitaries.

The Iraqi general counsel's office is in the process of forming this country's version of the U.S.'s Uniform Code of Military Justice, said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Ed Downey, assistant staff judge advocate for the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq's legal office. They have a basic disciplinary framework for military offenses, and how to enforce them. One of the main purposes of the conference was to discuss how to handle serious criminal issues and breaches of discipline, Downey said.

"We are working with the general counsel's office, making suggestions, and they've taken a look at our UCMJ, along with the British and European equivalents," Downey said. "They're trying to cull what works for them and come up with something that is their own."

Minister of Defense Hazem Shaalan encouraged those attending to continue helping Iraq's army move in the right direction by building a military justice system based on the principles of dignity, justice and integrity.

Australian Brig. Ian Errington, head of MNSTC-I's Joint Headquarters Advisory Support Team, also addressed the participants.



Australian Brig. Ian Errington shares his thoughts on soldiers and military justice with participants of Iraq's first-ever Military Law Conference.

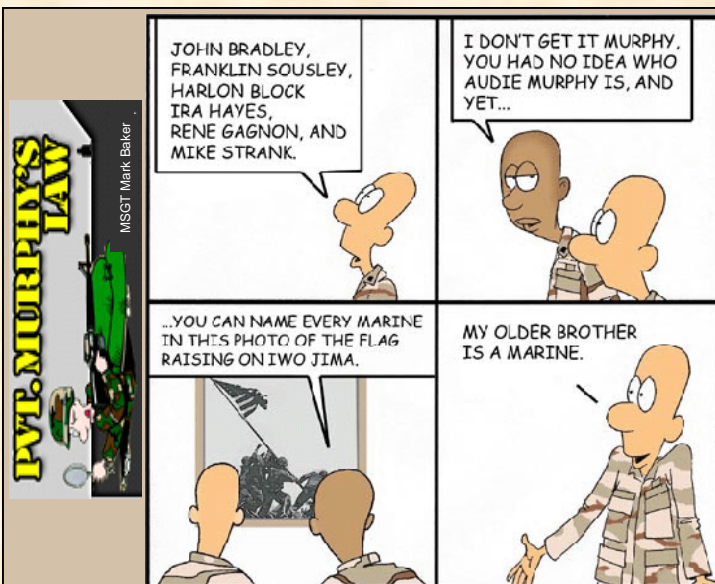
-Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

"A military force must maintain good discipline," Errington said. "It's discipline that sets armies apart from unruly mobs."

The application of law must be fair and applied consistently and without ambiguity to all ranks, Errington added.

Director General Tariq Aboudy, general counsel for Iraq's Ministry of Defense, said the conference was the first time civilian and military judges have come together in 50 years. He credited the assistance and support of U.S. and coalition advisors with helping make it happen.

"We hope the trials of our military courts in Iraq will one day be on the same level as in the states," he said. "This is the main purpose of the conference."



The Advisor

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Iraqi and U.S. Officer's Friendship Helps School

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

SOUTHERN IRAQ – Working with the Iraqi Army is about building relationships, says U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn, an Advisory Support Team leader for the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

Flynn and his team of Soldiers and Marines have been busy building relationships throughout Iraq over the past year. One in particular has thrived to create a friendship that has not only crossed cultural boundaries, but cemented them. Flynn's friendship with Gen. Kassim Jassin Nazal, who heads the 1st Mechanized Brigade of the Iraqi Army, has turned into a family affair that has helped many schools and students throughout Iraq, but especially the Al-Zuhur Kindergarten in southern Iraq.

Included in their friendship is a love of family and service.

"It all started because I sent some pictures back to my wife and kids," Flynn says. The next thing he knew, he was receiving boxes and boxes of school supplies from the students and parents of Belle Chasse Charter School at the Belle Chasse Marine Reserve Support base in Louisiana. Flynn's wife, Jan, helped organize school supply drives. The Flynns have three children attending the school.



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn poses with Gen. Kassim Jassin Nazal and his daughters at a kindergarten school in southern Iraq.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn and his team organize the supplies donated by students and parents from the Belle Chasse Charter School in Louisiana.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

while their loved one is deployed.

Kassim's wife is the headmistress of the Al-Zuhur Kindergarten, which has approximately 180 students. The southern area of Iraq is just now starting to recover, with agriculture as its main source of economic support. Under the old regime, farmers were not allowed to grow and sell rice, which thrives in the area.

As one of his team's final missions and to truly spread goodwill to an area in need, Flynn and his colleagues organized and loaded the remaining boxes of school supplies and brought them to Kassim's wife and her school. Included in the delivery to the school were boxes from a Central Florida civic group which also donated additional school

Flynn credits the success and amounts of school supplies he has received to the number of parents who are deployed out of the support base. He believes it helps families feel connected

supplies to the 1st Brigade's school supply program.

The children weren't scheduled to be in school when the mission was planned because of a holiday period. But Kassim's wife arranged for them and their teachers to come in to accept the gifts the U.S. Soldiers and Marines were bringing.

In an organized and structured distribution, Flynn and his crew unloaded and set up box after box of supplies. Then they fitted almost every child with a backpack and sent them through a line to be loaded up with paper, pencils, and crayons.

"The pictures reflect the truth," Kassim said, referring to drawings the children made that were presented to Flynn in appreciation. "The children are so happy. They feel they have new friends. They feel the teachers and children in America care about them and we feel so close to them and they always support and work with us."

Flynn and Kassim believe their friendship has been good for the Iraqi Army and schools in Iraq. This last mission spanned the distance of time and oceans, leaving a final message from the Flynns and others who donated their time and supplies to the families in Iraq: They wish them success in rebuilding their country.

Smiles and excitement were in abundance, along with waves, kisses and the blessing of "inshallah," meaning "God willing," as the friends left the school together to continue a final mission.

New Ambulances Headed to Iraqi Units

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The first 20 of an order of nearly 400 new ambulances are being delivered to the 1st Division of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Special Forces units. Another 200 ambulances are expected by the end of



Twenty new ambulances are on their way to Iraqi Army and Special Forces units. Close to 400 have been ordered and will replace existing Russian-made ambulances.

-Photo courtesy Coalition Military Assistance Training Team

March, with the remainder scheduled for delivery by May, according to logistics officials with the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq.

In time, each battalion in Iraq's armed forces will have at least six ambulances, said Maj. Tim Cox, a logistics officer for MNSTC-I. Iraq's Ministry of Defense requested the ambulances in December, he added.

At a cost of \$50,000 each, the ambulances will be capable of maneuvering in off-road conditions, up steep slopes and through mud and dry sand.

A raised air intake valve will extend the life of the air system, helping to prevent dust from clogging the system. Inside, ambulances are equipped with stretchers, oxygen tanks, mini tool boxes, and sanitary cabinets, said U.S. Navy Senior Chief Michael James, noncommissioned officer in charge of medical logistics for MNSTC-I's Health Affairs.

Existing Russian-made ambulances will be given to Iraqi provinces that don't have them, Cox said.

Iraqi Police Brigade Gets New Armored Security Vehicles

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The first two U.S.-made Armored Security Vehicles arrived in Iraq Feb. 25 and are headed to Taji, where they will be used by the 8th Mechanized Police Brigade.

In time, the brigade will have 50 Armored Security Vehicles in its inventory.

The ASV is a four-wheel drive vehicle with several layers of lightweight armor capable of protection from medium-caliber machine gun rounds and artillery fragments.

The Armored Security Vehicle is 8-feet wide, weighs about 15 tons, and can travel up to 63 miles per hour.

The 8th Mechanized Police Brigade is a paramilitary, counterinsurgency Iraqi police unit.



Officials look over two new Armored Security Vehicles after their arrival in Iraq. The light armored vehicles will be used by Iraq's 8th Mechanized Police Brigade.

-Photo courtesy Civilian Police Assistance Training Team

Iraqi Security Forces News Briefs

Iraqi Forces capture insurgents, uncover weapons cache

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS, Iraq – Iraqi security forces are actively stepping up their operations and activities. The 4th Battalion of the 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force in Mosul captured 28 insurgents Feb. 20, including one on a high value target list, according to officials at the Multinational Security Transition Command - Iraq.

In Fallujah, Iraqi Intervention Force members of the 3rd and 8th Battalions of the 2nd Brigade discovered several weapons caches Feb. 20, while conducting squad and security patrols.

Multinational officials stated this reflects that Iraqi security forces on a daily basis contribute to the security and stability of their nation.

Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers kill insurgents

NORTHWEST, Iraq – Members of the 22nd Battalion, 6th Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force captured a suspect in the mortar and sniper attack on the battalion's headquarters Feb. 21.

A platoon from the battalion killed two insurgents during an ambush in Al-Yarmuk while they were looking for a sniper. One of the insurgents was in a vehicle full of various types of munitions. The platoon also killed a sniper believed to have shot at multinational advisor support teams.

The Iraqi Intervention Force is the counterinsurgency force of the Iraqi army.

Citizen tip leads Iraqi police to potential car bomb

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi police officers discovered a car containing explosive devices parked about 90 meters behind the Bab Al Muadam Police Station Feb. 21 after a woman reported suspicious wires protruding from it.

Police officers investigating the woman's report saw unexploded munitions inside the blue car, parked near the station and the Islamic Bank. They notified the Iraqi Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit, which took apart and destroyed the bomb. Six artillery rounds and three propane tanks were wired to blow the car up.

In other Iraqi police news, officers in Basrah conducted a combined operation with coalition forces that resulted in the arrest of three Iraqi men who are believed to belong to a group that claimed responsibility for recent assassinations of Iraqi police officers and drive-by shootings at vehicle check points.

Officers confiscated a black suitcase containing several hundred thousand dollars in Syrian and Iraqi currency and \$6,000 in U.S. money, still in bank wrappers. They also seized an AK-47 machine gun, several compact discs, a ledger and related paperwork.

Citizens detain insurgents, hold for pick up

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A group of Huriyah citizens captured four insurgents they said were responsible for ambushes against Iraqi and Coalition forces along Highway 6, then held them until Iraqi Special Police Commandoes could pick them up.

A team of commandoes traveled to Huriyah Feb. 22 to transport the suspects into custody. Two Apache helicopters from the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division provided the commandoes protection from the air as they made their way into Huriyah.

Residents gathered outside to greet the commandoes with applause, and an announcement from the mosque loudspeakers welcomed their arrival, according to multinational and Iraqi reports.

Raids help Iraqi forces kill, capture insurgents

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers with Iraq's intervention forces killed 35 insurgents and captured another 43 in raids conducted in northwest Iraq Feb. 22, according to a multinational force report.

Platoons from the 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade conducted the raids and search missions over a three-day period. One unidentified high-value target was captured.

The Iraqi Intervention Force is the counter-insurgency force of the Iraqi Army.

In addition, 10 patrols conducted by soldiers from the 18th Battalion, 7th Brigade of the Iraqi army near Fallujah led to the discovery of a rocket launcher, a 60 mm mortar round, one smoke and one hand grenade.

Iraqi soldiers raid IED supply house

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers discovered two improvised explosive devices and the materials to make them inside a house in northwest Iraq Feb. 23. Acting on a tip, soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade were conducting raids when they made the discovery. The IEDs were destroyed and four people detained.

The Iraqi Intervention Force is the counterinsurgency force of the Iraqi army.

Information nets cash reward

FALLUJAH, Iraq – A \$600 reward went to a Fallujah citizen recently for helping an adviser support team with the Iraqi Army's 7th Brigade capture an insurgent who had a suicide vest and several sniper rifles.

Information from the citizen led to the recovery of 15 rockets, four anti-tank mines, several rocket-propelled grenades and several different fuses for munitions. The citizen also led the team to the location of the insurgent, who was captured.

Iraqi Security Forces News Briefs—Continued...

Iraq Police graduate 1,993 new police officers

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The Iraq Police Service this week graduated 1,993 new police officers from basic police training courses in Sulaymaniyah and Baghdad. Completing the eight-week training courses were 259 police recruits from the Sulaymaniyah Regional Police Training Center and 1,734 recruits from the Baghdad Police Academy. The Baghdad class included 46 female police recruits.

The basic police training program is designed to provide fundamental and democratic policing skills based on international human rights standards to the students in preparation for assuming police officer responsibilities. The program consists of academic study of general policing topics combined with a strong focus on tactical operational policing skills.

To date, more than 25,000 police recruits have completed the eight-week training course developed for new recruits. An additional 35,000 police officers have completed the three-week Transitional Integration Program (TIPs) course that provides officers with prior experience a condensed version of the longer basic police training course.

The new officers will immediately report for duty and take up their assignments at their respective police stations throughout Iraq.

Iraqi Police Service graduates 204

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The Iraqi Police Service graduated 204 police officers from advanced and specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility Feb. 24, as part of the Iraqi government's ongoing effort to train its security forces.

The courses consist of Basic Criminal Investigation with 60 graduates, Executive Leadership with 27 graduates, First-Line Supervision with 33 graduates, Incident Command System with 29 graduates, Interviews & Interrogations with 20 graduates, and Internal Controls with 35 graduates.

The Basic Criminal Investigation course covers topics such as theft, burglary, arson, robbery, sexual offenses, and homicide investigation. Participants also receive instruction and hands-on training in fingerprinting, photography, tool marks and plaster casting.

Executive Leadership, designed for senior police leaders, covers executive level concepts of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting. Other areas covered in the course are visionary leadership, organizational values, interpersonal communication skills, motivational techniques and strategies, along with strategic planning.

First-Line Supervision focuses on a combination of human rights training, ethics, and policing in a democracy and includes a heavy focus on interpersonal skills.

Incident Command teaches first response techniques to a crime or accident scene, how to coordinate agencies responding to the scene and managing assets at the scene.

Interviews & Interrogations covers advanced interview and interrogation techniques and includes the preservation and protection of human rights, and the importance of ethical behavior during interviews and interrogations.

Internal Controls provides training on how to deal with personnel complaints and allegations, as well as police conduct in general. Training includes the processing of complaints and conducting follow-up investigations to determine the facts of allegations made against members of the Iraqi Police Service.

Officers who participated in these courses previously completed either an eight-week basic training course for new recruits or the three-week 'transitional integration program' course designed for prior-service officers.

The police officers report back for continued duty at their respective stations immediately.

Citizen tip could lead to reward

BAGHDAD, Iraq - An Iraqi citizen who provided information that led to the discovery of an improvised explosive device near the entrance to an Iraqi Army base may be getting a \$200 reward.

Advisers to Iraqi troops stationed at the base have requested the reward for the citizen, a resident of Fallujah. The citizen personally led a coalition team to the IED Feb. 1 and offered additional information about insurgent activity in the area. In their request, the advisers credited the citizen with helping protect the safety and security of U.S. and Iraqi forces.

Iraqi Army soldier attempts to stop IED

TIKRIT, Iraq - An off-duty Iraqi Army soldier was wounded when he attempted to stop anti-Iraqi forces from detonating an improvised explosive device near a Task Force Liberty combat patrol near Samarra Feb. 21.

The soldier, who suffered a gunshot wound to the arm, was treated by a Task Force Liberty medic and taken by Iraqi civilians to the hospital in Samarra.

Task Force Liberty Soldiers secured the site and disposed of the IED.

Iraqi police apprehend suspected kidnappers

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The arrest of four men by Iraqi police officers led to the return of two Iraqi brothers who had been kidnapped and reported missing by their family.

Iraqi police officers from the Al Ouds Police Station were conducting a random check point Feb. 24 when a vehicle approached them, then turned around and tried to avoid the check point.

The officers chased the car and after a short gun battle that injured one police officer, arrested four men suspected of kidnapping. Information from the suspects led to the brothers reuniting with their family, according to a multinational forces report.

Iraqi Brigade Takes Control of Area, Future

Story by 1st Infantry Division Public Affairs Office

KHADAMIYA, Iraq – The 40th Brigade of the Iraqi Army assumed control of its area of operation Feb. 21.

Brig. Gen. Jaleel Khalaf Shwail, 40th Brigade commander, said he is proud to represent his country and his more than 2,300 soldiers.

"This is a historical event in the history of Iraq," he said. "It is our time to take the liberty and democracy (Coalition forces) gave to us on a golden plate."

Khalaf praised Coalition forces for their assistance in liberating Iraq and training Iraqi soldiers. He said the training they received helped them take this next big step toward Iraqi autonomy.



Lt. Gen. Daham Alassal, Ministry of Defense, and Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, 1st Cavalry Division commander, salute during the 40th transfer of authority ceremony Feb. 21.
-U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin, 2/10th Mountain Division

For months, Soldiers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, also known as Task Force Bengal, have been training the Iraqi soldiers on combat and staff operations.

"Americans trained us very well," Khalaf said. "When they give us a direct responsibility, it means we are at a level that we can control ourselves."

The brigade's area of operation covers numerous spots in Baghdad, including Haifa Street, Ahdamiyah, Sheikh Malouf and Al Shaab. Coalition Forces will continue to advise the brigade, but the areas will be under complete Iraqi control.

Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, 1st Cavalry Division commander, attended the ceremony and applauded the strides Iraqi troops have made over the past year.

"This is just the beginning," Chiarelli said. "No one can doubt your high level of readiness. No one can doubt your resolve. No one can doubt your patriotism. This is just the beginning."

Following the transfer of authority, Chiarelli presented a plaque to Jaleel in memory of those who died on the job, providing security for the Jan. 31 elections. Fourteen members of combined security forces, including Iraqi soldiers and police officers, were killed during the elections.

"We dedicate this plaque to the martyrs, your brothers in

arms," he said. "They are heroes whose great work will not be forgotten."

Khalaf said post-election Iraq is full of hope for the future and faith in his soldiers and Coalition forces

"After the elections, Iraqi people started gaining trust back in the American forces," he said. The elections "gave the image that the Iraqi troops could provide security for Iraq."

Fouad Alhilaly, a doctor with the 40th Brigade, said the Iraqi soldiers have their work cut out for them, but they are fully capable of handling the area. If they can handle Baghdad, they can handle Iraq, he said.

"Baghdad is the cornerstone of Iraq," he said. "If we can control Baghdad, we will have 70 percent of the security of Iraq handled."

Khalaf vowed he would not rest until his nation is safe from terrorists.

"Every single second before I die I will use to finish them," he said. "All I wish is to give the Iraqi people rest (and the means to) enjoy freedom. When I feel Iraq gets to that level, I accomplished my mission and I will rest."

The 40th Brigade has approximately 2,300 soldiers and will patrol an area that is about 16 square kilometers in size.

Combat Zone or Not, Marines Will Mess

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq — When it comes to tradition — especially one rife with camaraderie and good-natured ribbing — dedicated Marines will stop at nothing to see it through. Even in a combat zone.



U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Edwards, of the Multi-National Security Transition Command — Iraq, leads a procession to the head table of the first Mess Night in Baghdad. Following him is U.S. Marine Corps Col. Francis X. Ryan, chief of the Secretariat for Multi-National Forces — Iraq and U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Joseph S. Weber, chief of staff for MNF-I. —U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Allen Thomas

Roughly 300 active, former and retired Marines serving in the greater Baghdad area gathered Feb. 24 for a U.S. Marine Corps Mess Night in a palace once owned by deposed Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein. A handful of Coalition service members attended as special guests.

The Corps traces the earliest roots of Mess Night to the 18th Century, to a dinner held in honor of Commodore Stephen Decatur and Capt. Charles Steward. The National Intelligencer newspaper reported: “The company sat down to dinner at five o’clock and spent the evening with the purest harmony and good humor. After the cloth was removed, many toasts were drunk, accompanied with high patriotic songs and music by the Marine Band.”

Presided over by U.S. Marine Corps Col. Barrett Byrd, who heads the future operations section of Multi-National Forces — Iraq’s strategic operations, the Baghdad Mess was a mix of traditional ceremony and situation-dictated ingenuity.

Duty uniforms subbed for the usual formal attire, dinner was served buffet-style and music was provided by U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Mark Silvia on bagpipes. Silvia is a planner with Multi-National Forces — Iraq. Singing was focused on one tune: the Marine Corps song.

An exemption to the no-alcohol order allowed each person two beers, but many of the hands rising for toasts to the

heads of foreign states, the U.S. president and those in harms way, were gripping bottles of water or soda cans.

There was no getting around the no-smoking policy of the palace, so members of the Mess moved to an outdoor pool area after the formalities to light the smoking lamp, puff cigars, and swap stories. With living quarters nearby, members were asked to keep the volume down.

The head table included Byrd and U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Edwards, of the Multi-National Security Transition Command — Iraq; U.S. Marine Corps Col. Francis X. Ryan, chief of the Secretariat for Multi-National Forces — Iraq; U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Joseph S. Weber, chief of staff for MNF-I; U.S. Navy Cmdr. Donald Cramblit, deputy command chaplain for MNF-I; and retired U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Arnold Fields.

Cramblit, who spent nine years in the Corps, has a son, a Marine staff sergeant, who is also serving in Iraq. Cramblit’s son-in-law, a Marine first lieutenant, is also in Iraq and attended the Mess.

As special guests were introduced, members of the Mess welcomed them with enthusiastic applause. Marines stood for an extended ovation at the last introduction, for Iraqi Lt. Col. Mustafa Moosa, who is destined for the Marine War College at Quantico, Va. in August.

The tradition of parading the beef started the dinner hour. Silvia sounded the bagpipes, leading a white-jacketed server carrying a large serving tray to the head table. Byrd inspected the meat, cut off a piece and ate it.

“I find this beef quite tasty, delicious and fit for human consumption,” he declared, eliciting a loud chorus of hoorahs and applause.

Laughter rippled throughout the dining facility when it came time for fines to be levied -- \$1 punishments for breaking rules of the Mess, or any egregious behavior deemed worthy of penalty. Those who lacked the foresight to bring cash were allowed to write IOUs; change was not an option.

Ryan paid up for “shamelessly soliciting” votes for a future run for a district office in Pennsylvania, as did those who once wore the Marine uniform but showed up wearing the uniform of another service. Their infraction: “Poor judgment for leaving the Corps.” But for making the “wise decision to continue serving this great nation,” the fine was levied at one dollar.

With a sheepish grin, one man wearing an Army desert camouflage uniform stood to pay the \$1 fine. The crowd roared.

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Marines Will Mess—Continued...

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U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Joseph S. Weber, chief of staff for MNF-I, addresses the Mess as guest of honor.
-U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Allen Thomas

U.S. Marine Corps 1st Lt. Nathan McFadden scored a hit with his request to fine those who chose to wear cologne to the Mess.

"It offends my infantry sensibilities," McFadden said. "I find it repulsive for a Marine to wear cologne in a combat zone."

Weber, the guest of honor, praised the Marines in his remarks, which he prefaced by describing himself as a "non-politically correct speaker." His candor earned him a standing ovation.

"Each and every one of you in this room is special. You are unique. You are different. You are a member of the greatest fighting force in the world," Byrd said. "That is a big burden. Never take it for granted."

He noted that it's not a coincidence that the first person people see when they visit any embassy in the world is a Marine. A Marine is unique, Byrd said, because they will kill an enemy in hand-to-hand combat without hesitation and an hour later, rush into a street through gun fire to rescue a child.

Byrd urged members of the Mess to leave with two things in mind: the Marine slugging it out in the trenches and the families back home enduring the ache of separation and, in some cases, the agony of loss.

"What we do is sacrifice," Byrd said. "But what they do is pure sacrifice."

For U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. James Schiele, this was his third Mess in the four years he's been in a Marine uniform. Although he's accustomed to alcohol playing a larger role in the event, he said that considering the situation, the Mess was a good time.

"It's being in the company of other Marines," Schiele said. "And seeing people you wouldn't normally see goofing off."

The idea for having the Mess started with a casual conversation Feb. 7 between Byrd, Ryan and Lt. Col. James Becker, of MNF-I. With just a few weeks of planning and execution, Becker couldn't be more pleased with the results.

"What strikes me as something I'll remember is that I was part of the first Marine Corps Mess Night in Baghdad, in a combat zone, surrounded by 300 of my fellow Marines in Saddam Hussein's palace," Becker said. "It just doesn't get any better than that."



U.S. Marine Corps Col. Barrett Byrd uses a knife to taste the beef. He declared it "quite tasty and fit for human consumption."
-U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Allen Thomas

Outside the Wire: Life as an Advisory Support Team Member

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS, Iraq – “My relationship with you is more than friendship. I regard you more than friends. I call you brothers,” are the words of Iraqi Army Col. Abd Al-Amer Kamil Abd Al-Allah to a team of U.S. Marines and Soldiers who have helped guide and train his soldiers for the past year.

The team – U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn, U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Reggie Jackson, U.S. Marine Corps Master Sgt. Victor Letourneaut, U.S. Army Maj. Dennis Swanson, and U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Russell Cotton – are members of an Advisory Support Team known as ASTs.

As they prepare to head home, their Iraqi colleagues bid them farewell with words of friendship, a blessing, a meal, and small tokens of appreciation.

The team came together through happenstance and each individual pulls his weight and does his part to execute the tasks and missions they’ve been assigned. The two senior ranking officers, often seen packing their own “Hummers,” lived by true principles of leadership.



As a token of their appreciation, Iraqi Army Gen. Kassim and Col. Abd Al-Amer catered a feast of chicken, fish, lamb, and rice in honor of the departing ASTs.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

“They lead by example and motivate soldiers through their leadership style. [Their motto being] Not as we do, do as you do. Make it happen for your people. Mission first,”

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. David Catani says of Flynn and Swanson’s leadership. “I’d follow that man into battle anywhere. That’s no joke. He is the most competent commander I’ve ever worked with.”

Catani is part of a second wave of ASTs who arrived a few months ago to replace those departing.

What is life like for an AST? “It’s where the mission is outside the wire,” Swanson says. His colleagues echo the

sentiment. Camp Taji is where the group is based. The Camp has a Coalition side and an Iraqi side. The ASTs that work with the 1st Mechanized brigade of the Iraqi Army live on the Iraqi side.

When they aren’t conducting basic exercises like live range activities, reflexive fire training, military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) training, mounting and dismounting from convoys, and foot patrols, the ASTs of the 1st Mech. Brigade are outside the wire in combat missions with the Iraqi soldiers.

Flynn makes no bones about getting the job done and his team following suit. He emphasizes in a very matter-of-fact manner, “it’s about foundation of discipline.” Flynn recounts a time when the Iraqi camp was littered with garbage due to the carelessness of soldiers. He took Gen. Kassim Jassin Nazal for a ride over to the coalition side of the camp and asked him to look around. “Do you see garbage thrown everywhere in the camp?” he asked.

The next morning, Flynn and Kassim led by example. They gathered the brigade and joined them for a police call, picking up trash throughout the camp. Now, as Flynn prepares for his departure, he smiles and takes pride in saying, “Things that took a week and a half to accomplish with the Iraqi soldiers before, we don’t even worry about today.”

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"It's about building relationships. Foundation and discipline is key," Flynn repeats like it is something he can never say enough.

"[These soldiers] are not the U.S. Army or Marines and they don't want to be. They want to be a professional Iraqi Army," Flynn says. "They will develop their own identity. You have to push them hard; you have to be patient and understanding to know they have to do it their own way."

Flynn, though he wouldn't admit it, is like an Iraqi Army rock star. Everyone knows him and everyone loves him whether it is the Iraqis, the Americans, or even reporters who tag along for a ride.

He and his team live in the same type of barracks as the Iraqis; they eat with the Iraqis, and engage the enemy with the Iraqis. Absorption and integration are too soft of words to describe the cohesion of this team of ASTs.

When Flynn takes a moment to reflect on his U.S. military colleagues he says, "This mix of Army and Marines has been the most rewarding piece [of my experience], other than working with the Iraqi soldiers. Not having a set team, set mindset, having the flexibility to break through paradigms and shift focus of efforts and get things done the way they have to be in a combat environment – the flexibility, innovation, and ingenuity of this team has been nothing less than amazing."



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Flynn takes a moment to e-mail his wife at his desk in his barracks on the Iraqi side of Camp Taji.
-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

The feeling from his team members is mutual. As a leader, Flynn treats the Soldiers and Marines he works with as professionals. Rank pales in comparison and takes a back seat to letting good men do good work.

Swanson said he will miss the challenges and rewards he faced and received on a daily basis.

"[The Iraqi soldiers] watch you very closely. They will take care of you. They are good soldiers," Swanson says. "Get mad at them, push them hard, but always remember they may be there to save you one day."

Swanson like the rest of the team has gone on numerous combat missions with the Iraqi soldiers he helped train. He said the intelligence the U.S. and Iraqi military received from working with the Iraqi soldiers outside the wire led to the capture of more than 100 insurgents by the 1st Mech. Brigade.

Ask Cotton about the reality of that statement. He recalls his first mission with Iraqi soldiers on the Syrian border where they caught two smugglers.



U.S. Army Maj. Dennis Swanson places hair bands in an Iraqi girls hair during a goodwill mission with the 1st Mechanized brigade of the Iraqi Army at a landfill village near Taji.
-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Russell Cotton carries a box of school supplies for Iraqi children in Southern Iraq.
-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

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Outside the Wire—Continued...

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U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Reggie Jackson cleans "his baby" a 50 cal machine gun prior to a mission.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

"I learned a lot from these guys," Cotton says. "Training the Iraqi Army was new and challenging and in the end, very satisfying."

To his replacements Cotton offers, "Be patient; don't think you are dealing with U.S. Soldiers or the U.S. Soldier mind-set. You have to change your mind-set from garrison. Here, every mission is a live mission."

Jackson recalled how he started with the Iraqi soldiers from basic

training, to intermediate training, to combat mission training, and successful combat missions. He will miss the camaraderie and comic relief.

"You build some strong friendships with the interpreters and other Iraqi soldiers," Jackson says.

To future ASTs he advised, "Stay patient. Small victories; they are not U.S. Soldiers but one day will be close. They can't get there without your help. Help these guys get to the next level."

The team experience would not be complete without comments from the proverbial peanut gallery. Usually driving the tail gun

"Hummer" in a convoy, Letourneaut remains humble about his experience working with the Iraqis. Over the internal communications in their "Hummer," he exchanges lively banter with his fellow U.S. Marines. If there is a wisecrack to be made, Letourneaut is on the alert.

In a serious moment reflecting on his job as an AST he said he will miss making friendships. "The training turned into mentoring and making friends," he said.

Letourneaut added, "Being the Soldier, the Iraqi, the Marine; that's what works. The whole teamwork concept works."

From a passenger's view...

Flynn and his team are operational even as this article is written with only two days before their tour ends. Having the privilege to run two of their final missions with these ASTs leaves me filled with inspiration and gratitude for the experience.

The image of these Marines and Soldiers driving along in convoys on countless missions, waving at Iraqi children and hearing them say over their 'comms,' "Hello kids, just say no to terrorism," as if they were broadcasting a "just say no to drugs" campaign will forever be impressed upon my mind. That and hearing them joke about how much money they can get from the insurgents for a military journalist.

What really stands out, though, are not the U.S. Soldiers and U.S. Marines and Iraqi soldiers. What stands out are the men, who in Arab tradition greet with handshakes and a kiss to each side of the cheek – a gesture of respect and love shared between brothers as so declared by Iraqi Col. Abd Al-Amer.

While their tales of combat missions in Mosul, Fallujah, Taji, and other areas in Iraq were hinted at, the proud moments of these ASTs shine in their description of going with the Iraqi soldiers on election day for security patrols. Instead of taking an active role, they were able to take a moment to enjoy the fruits of their labors. They stood back, bought some bread at an Iraqi bakery and watched democracy become a reality for the men they ate, slept, and trained with over the last year. They lived in a moment of history, a moment of joy for their fellow humans, and now they live to return home.

They began their lives in Iraq as advisers and will leave as men of honor amongst others who perform honorably in the Iraqi, U.S., and Coalition militaries. These ASTs lived life, "outside the wire."



U.S. Marine Corps Master Sgt. Victor Letourneaut carries backpacks for children at a school in southern Iraq.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

Iraqi Interim Government Launches Web site

Visit www.iraqigovernment.org for more details.

BAGHDAD, Iraq—The Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) is making its presence known on the World Wide Web. With the launch of the Iraqi Interim Government Web site, the IIG will provide the latest developments as the country moves towards an established democracy, drafting its constitution, and electing a permanent government.

Currently, visitors to the site will be able to see some limited information about the activities of the Iraqi Government. The site is still under construction.

The site is divided into sections about the President, Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers' Secretariat and links to Ministries. In addition, the site will have a latest news section and a section for press releases.

Plans are underway to develop an area for Iraqi citizens to give their opinions. Updates with progress on the rebuilding of the New Iraq and progress towards the December 2005 elections will be available when the site is fully developed.



Iraqi Security Forces' Casualties and Wounded To-date



Iraqi citizens join the Iraqi Security Forces for a chance to serve their country. Through their dedication and sacrifice to protect their commu-

nities, many have fallen or been injured as a result of their devotion to seeing democracy triumph in their homeland.

The data in the tables represents the number of casualties, either killed or wounded in action in the Iraqi Security Forces since standing up the first unit in November 2003. This data is current as of Feb. 22, 2005.

-Data provided by MNSTCI Personnel (J-1)

Pre Elections	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action
Iraqi Security Forces		
Facilities Protection Service	44	78
Border Enforcement Officers	8	29
Police Service	613	1,387
Iraqi Army	477	4,458
TOTAL	1,142	2,952

Post Elections	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action
Iraqi Security Forces		
Facilities Protection Service	1	3
Border Enforcement Officers	0	3
Police Service	46	159
Iraqi Army	37	158
TOTAL	84	323